PD POETRY - FEBRUARY 2017

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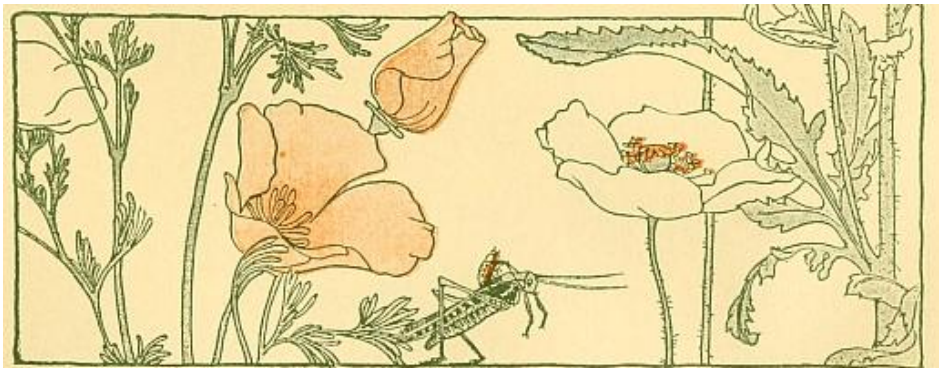

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DAFFODILS

I wander'd lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the Milky Way,
They stretch'd in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee:
A poet could not but be gay,
In such a jocund company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Project Gutenberg's The Cambridge Book of Poetry for Children, by Various

LILIES IN THE FIRE

I

Ah, you stack of white lilies, all white and gold,
I am adrift as a sunbeam, and without form
Or having, save I light on you to warm
Your pallor into radiance, flush your cold

White beauty into incandescence: you
Are not a stack of white lilies to-night, but a white
And clustered star transfigured by me to-night,
And lighting these ruddy leaves like a star dropped through

The slender bare arms of the branches, your tire-maidens
Who lift swart arms to fend me off; but I come
Like a wind of fire upon you, like to some
Stray whitebeam who on you his fire unladens.

And you are a glistening toadstool shining here
Among the crumpled beech-leaves phosphorescent,
My stack of white lilies burning incandescent
Of me, a soft white star among the leaves, my dear.

II

Is it with pain, my dear, that you shudder so?
Is it because I have hurt you with pain, my dear?

    Did I shiver?--Nay, truly I did not know--
    A dewdrop may-be splashed on my face down here.

Why even now you speak through close-shut teeth.
I have been too much for you--Ah, I remember!

    The ground is a little chilly underneath
    The leaves--and, dear, you consume me all to an ember.

You hold yourself all hard as if my kisses
Hurt as I gave them--you put me away--

    Ah never I put you away: yet each kiss hisses
    Hot as a drop of fire wastes me away.

III

I am ashamed, you wanted me not to-night--
Nay, it is always so, you sigh with me.
Your radiance dims when I draw too near, and my free
Fire enters your petals like death, you wilt dead white.

Ah, I do know, and I am deep ashamed;
You love me while I hover tenderly
Like clinging sunbeams kissing you: but see
When I close in fire upon you, and you are flamed

With the swiftest fire of my love, you are destroyed.
'Tis a degradation deep to me, that my best
Soul's whitest lightning which should bright attest
God stepping down to earth in one white stride,

Means only to you a clogged, numb burden of flesh
Heavy to bear, even heavy to uprear
Again from earth, like lilies wilted and sere
Flagged on the floor, that before stood up so fresh.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of Love Poems and Others, by D. H. Lawrence

Antique

BY DJUNA BARNES

A LADY in a cowl of lawn,
With straight bound tabs and muted eyes,
And lips fair thin and deftly drawn
And oddly wise.

A cameo, a ruff of lace,
A neck cut square, with corners laid,
A thin Greek nose, and near the face
A polished braid.

Low, sideways looped, of amber stain,
The pale ears caught within its snare.
A profile like a dagger lain
Between the hair.

COURT LADY STANDING UNDER A PLUM TREE

Autumn winds roll through the dry leaves
On her garments;
Autumn birds shiver
Athwart star-hung skies.
Under the blossoming plum-tree,
She expresses the pilgrimage
Of grey souls passing,
Athwart love's scarlet maples
To the ash-strewn summit of death.

I SEEK A WILD STAR

WHAT seek you in this hoarse hard sand
That shuffles from your futile hand?
Your limbs are wry. With salt despair
All day the scant winds freeze your hair.
What mystery in the barren sand
Seek you to understand?

_All day the acute winds' finger-tips
Flay my skin and cleave my lips.
But though like fame about my skull
Leap the gibes of the cynic gull,
I shall not go from this place. I
Seek through all curved vacancy
Though the sea taunt me and frost scar,
I seek a star, a star!_

Why seek you this, why seek you this
Of all distraught futilities?
The tide slides closer. The tide's teeth
Shall bite your body with keen death!
Of all unspaced things that are
Vain, vain, most hideously far,
Why seek you then a star?

_I seek a wild star, I that am
Eaten by earth and all her shame;
To whom fields, towns are a close clot
Of mud whence the worm dieth not;
To whom all running water is
Besnagged with timeless treacheries,
Who in a babe's heart see designed
Mine own distortion and the blind
Lusts of all my kind!
Hence of all things that are
Vain, most hideously far,
A star, I seek, a star!_

LOUIS GOLDING
(_QUEEN'S_)

The Project Gutenberg EBook of Oxford Poetry, 1920, by Vera Mary Brittain

FATHER, FATHER ABRAHAM

(_On the Anniversary of Lincoln's Birth_)

Father, Father Abraham,
To-day look on us from above;
On us, the offspring of thy faith,
The children of thy Christ-like love.

For that which we have humbly wrought,
Give us to-day thy kindly smile;
Wherein we've failed or fallen short,
Bear with us, Father, yet awhile.

Father, Father Abraham,
To-day we lift our hearts to thee,
Filled with the thought of what great price
Was paid, that we might ransomed be.

To-day we consecrate ourselves
Anew in hand and heart and brain,
To send this judgment down the years:
The ransom was not paid in vain.

Project Gutenberg's Fifty years & Other Poems, by James Weldon Johnson

HIKER AT MIDNIGHT

By Carl Sandburg

**MEMORIES, you can flick me and sting me.
Memories, you can hold me even and smooth.**

**A circle of pearl mist horizons
is not a woman to be walked up to and kissed
nor a child to be taken and held for a good-night,
nor any old coffee-drinking pal to be smiled at in
the eyes and left with a grip and a handshake.**

**Pearl memories in the mist circling the horizon,
flick me, sting me, hold me even and smooth.**

BEETHOVEN

The argument of music,
I heard thy plea, O friend;
Who might debate with thee?

Heart was a little child, cried for the moon,
Brain was a man, said, nay.
Science is big, and Time is a-throb,
Hold thy heart, Heart.

Wan Silence lying lip on ground,
An outcast Angel from the Heaven of sound,
Prone and desolate
By the shut Gate.

Artificial Light

Warm and golden and dear
  In custom and kindness set,
We builded against our fear
  A place wherein to forget
Darkness that rings us near.

Here our hearts we deceive
  And will not understand.
Whether we laugh or grieve
  We dwell in a lamp-lit land--
A land of make-believe

Not too high for our pride
  Whereto we are ever bond
Nor for our souls too wide--
  And all is night beyond
Where monstrous things abide.

Still without ceasing we
  Watch on our stronghold keep,
Lest lamps burn flickeringly,
  And, while we slumber and sleep,
Outcast eternity

Break in a moment through
  Our soul-built barriers slight,
Look in on us with blue
  Lustreless eyes, whose light
Life everlasting slew.

Heavy with endless days,
With endless wisdom sad,
Should those eyes behold our days
And our loves wherein we are glad,
We might not abide their gaze.

Our sorrows flee fast away
Like shadows before the morn,
In the light of eternal day
Pale all our joys forlorn,
Elf-gold that will not stay;

Find we, looking again,
For all our cherished treasures
And all our labours vain,
Weariness all our pleasures
And worthless all our pain.

Our vanities kissed and curled,
Ere the swift vision is gone,
Into the void are hurled;
But we ourselves live on,
Waifs in a blasted world,

Where light and laughter and love
Lie dead in the dark together
And we brood their dust above,
Knowing not surely whether
'Tis life at our hearts doth move.

Lost without remedy,
We sit under pitiless skies
Mourning the moment we
Looked with our finite eyes
Into Infinity!

FORSAKEN

The word is said, and I no more shall know
Aught of the changing story of her days,
Nor any treasure that her lips bestow.

And I, who loving her was wont to praise
All things in love, now reft of music go
With silent step down unfrequented ways.

My soul is like a lonely market-place,
Where late were laughing folk and shining steeds
And many things of comeliness and grace;

And now between the stones are twisting weeds,
No sound there is, nor any friendly face,
Save for a bedesman telling o'er his beads.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of Poems, 1908-1919, by John Drinkwater

DOUBLE RED DAISIES

Double red daisies, they're my flowers
Which nobody else may grow
In a big quarrelsome house like ours
They try it sometimes, but no,
I root them up because they're my flowers
Which nobody else may grow.
_Claire has a tea-rose, but she didn't plant it;
Ben has an iris, but I don't want it.
Daisies, double red daisies for me,
The beautifullest flowers in the garden._

Double red daisy, that's my mark:
I paint it in all my books.
It's carved high up on the beech-tree bark--
How neat and lovely it looks!
So don't forget that it's my trademark;
Don't copy it in your books.
_Claire has a tea-rose, but she didn't plant it;
Ben has an iris, but I don't want it.
Daisies, double red daisies for me,
The beautifullest flowers in the garden._

ROBERT GRAVES
The Project Gutenberg EBook of Oxford Poetry, 1917, by Various

I BE THINKIN'

THE hillside green with bracken,
And the red plough land,
The brownish hurrying rivers,
Where the willows stand.
The thickets and the meadows,
And the strong oak trees;
O, tell me traveller, have yer
Seen the like o' these?

The mists along the common,
At the close of day,
They're lovely when the twilight
Makes the vale look grey.
The lanes be long and lonely,
But they all lead home;
I be thinkin' lads are foolish
When they wants to roam!

Project Gutenberg's Songs of Three Counties, by Marguerite Radclyffe-Hall

THE INDIA WHARF

HERE in the velvet stillness
The wide sown fields fall to the faint horizon,
Sleeping in starlight. . . .

A year ago we walked in the jangling city
Together . . . . forgetful.
One by one we crossed the avenues,
Rivers of light, roaring in tumult,
And came to the narrow, knotted streets.
Thru the tense crowd
We went aloof, ecstatic, walking in wonder,
Unconscious of our motion.
Forever the foreign people with dark, deep-seeing eyes
Passed us and passed.
Lights and foreign words and foreign faces,
I forgot them all;
I only felt alive, defiant of all death and sorrow,
Sure and elated.

That was the gift you gave me. . . .

The streets grew still more tangled,
And led at last to water black and glossy,
Flecked here and there with lights, faint and far off.
There on a shabby building was a sign
"The India Wharf " . . . and we turned back.

I always felt we could have taken ship
And crossed the bright green seas
To dreaming cities set on sacred streams
And palaces
Of ivory and scarlet.

=THE HESPERIDES=

Hesperus and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree.
--COMUS.

The Northwind fall'n, in the newstarréd night
Zidonian Hanno, voyaging beyond
The hoary promontory of Soloë
Past Thymiaterion, in calmèd bays,
Between the Southern and the Western Horn,
Heard neither warbling of the nightingale,
Nor melody o' the Lybian lotusflute
Blown seaward from the shore; but from a slope
That ran bloombright into the Atlantic blue,
Beneath a highland leaning down a weight
Of cliffs, and zoned below with cedarshade,
Came voices, like the voices in a dream,
Continuous till he reached the other sea.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of The Suppressed Poems of Alfred Lord Tennyson

Translations from the Spanish, "El Romancero"

I

Although you do your best to regard me
With an air seeming offended,
Never can you deny, when all's ended,
Calm eyes, that you _did_ regard me.

However much you're at pains to
Offend me, by which I may suffer,
What offence is there can make up for
The great good he finds who attains you?
For though with mortal fear you reward me,
Until my sorry sense is plenished,
Never can you deny, when all's ended,
Calm eyes, that you did regard me.

Thinking thus to dismay me
You beheld me with disdain,
But instead of destroying the gain,
In fact with doubled good you paid me.
For though you show them how hardly
They keep off from leniency bended,
Never can you deny, when all's ended,
Calm eyes, that you did regard me.

II

Ah, little green eyes,
Ah, little eyes of mine,
Ah, Heaven be willing
That you think of me somewise.

The day of departure
You came full of grieving
And to see I was leaving
The tears 'gan to start sure
With the heavy torture
Of sorrows unbrightened
When you lie down at night and
When there to you dreams rise,
Ah, Heaven be willing
That you think of me somewise.

Deep is my assurance
Of you, little green eyes,
That in truth you realise
Something of my durance
Eyes of hope's fair assurance
And good premonition

By virtue of whose condition
All green colours I prize.
Ah, Heaven be willing
That you think of me somewise.

Would God I might know you
To which quarter bended
And why comprehended
When sighings overflow you,
And if you must go through
Some certain despair,
For that you lose his care
Who was faithful always.
Ah, Heaven be willing
That you think of me these days.

Through never a moment
I've known how to live lest
All my thoughts but as one pressed
You-ward for their concernment.
May God send chastisement
If in this I belie me
And if it truth be
My own little green eyes.
Ah, Heaven be willing
That you think of me somewise.

III

Poplars of the meadow,
Fountains of Madrid,
Now I am absent from you
All are slandering me.

Each of you is telling
How evil my chance is
The wind among the branches,
The fountains in their welling
To every one telling
You were happy to see.
Now I am absent from you
All are slandering me.

With good right I may wonder
For that at my last leaving
The plants with sighs heaving
And the waters in tears were.
That you played double, never
Thought I this could be,
Now I am absent from you
All are slandering me.

There full in your presence
Music you sought to waken,

Later I'm forsaken
Since you are ware of my absence.
God, wilt Thou give me patience
Here while suffer I ye,
Now I am absent from you
All are slandering me.

IV

The day draweth nearer,
And morrow ends our meeting,
Ere they take thee sleeping
Be up--away, my treasure!

Soft, leave her breasts all unheeded,
Far hence though the master still remaineth!
For soon uptil our earth regaineth
The sun all embraces dividing.
N'er grew pleasure all unimpeded,
N'er was delight lest passion won,
And to the wise man the fit occasion
Has not yet refused a full measure:
Be up--away, my treasure!

If that my love thy bosom inflameth
With honest purpose and just intention,
To free me from my soul's contention
Give over joys the day shameth;
Who thee lameth he also me lameth,
And my good grace builds all in thy good grace;
Be up--away! Fear leaveth place,
That thou art here, no more unto pleasure,
Be up--away, my treasure!

Although thou with a sleep art wresting,
'Tis rightful thou bringst it close,
That of the favour one meeting shows
An hundred may hence be attesting.
'Tis fitting too thou shouldst be mindful
That the ease which we lose now, in kind, full
Many a promise holds for our leisure;
Ere they take thee sleeping;
Be up--away, my treasure!

The Project Gutenberg EBook of The Tempers, by William Carlos Williams

XXIII

Let us, in our love and ardour, let us live so
boldly our finest thoughts that they interweave
in harmony with the supreme ecstasy and perfect
fervour.

Because in our kindred souls something more holy
than we and purer and greater awakens, let us
clasp hands to worship it through ourselves.

It matters not that we have only cries or tears
to define it humbly, and that its charm is so
rare and powerful that, in the enjoyment of it,
our hearts are nigh to failing us.

Even so, let us remain, and for ever, the mad
devotees of this almost implacable love, and the
kneeling worshippers of the sudden God who reigns
in us, so violent and so ardently gentle that he
hurts and overwhelms us.

THE ROMAUNT OF MARGRET.

Can my affections find out nothing best,
But still and still remove?

QUARLES.

I.

I plant a tree whose leaf
The yew-tree leaf will suit:
But when its shade is o'er you laid,
Turn round and pluck the fruit.
Now reach my harp from off the wall
Where shines the sun aslant;
The sun may shine and we be cold!
O hearken, loving hearts and bold,
Unto my wild romaunt.
Margret, Margret.

II.

Sitteth the fair ladye
Close to the river side
Which runneth on with a merry tone
Her merry thoughts to guide:
It runneth through the trees,
It runneth by the hill,
Nathless the lady's thoughts have found
A way more pleasant still
Margret, Margret.

III.

The night is in her hair
And giveth shade to shade,
And the pale moonlight on her forehead white

Like a spirit's hand is laid;
Her lips part with a smile
Instead of speakings done:
I ween, she thinketh of a voice,
Albeit uttering none.
Margret, Margret.

IV.

All little birds do sit
With heads beneath their wings:
Nature doth seem in a mystic dream,
Absorbed from her living things:
That dream by that ladye
Is certes unpartook,
For she looketh to the high cold stars
With a tender human look
Margret, Margret.

V.

The lady's shadow lies
Upon the running river;
It lieth no less in its quietness,
For that which resteth never:
Most like a trusting heart
Upon a passing faith,
Or as upon the course of life
The steadfast doom of death.
Margret, Margret.

VI.

The lady doth not move,
The lady doth not dream,
Yet she seeth her shade no longer laid
In rest upon the stream:
It shaketh without wind,
It parteth from the tide,

It standeth upright in the cleft moonlight,
It sitteth at her side.
Margret, Margret.

VII.

Look in its face, ladye,
And keep thee from thy swound;
With a spirit bold thy pulses hold
And hear its voice's sound:
For so will sound thy voice
When thy face is to the wall,
And such will be thy face, ladye,
When the maidens work thy pall.
Margret, Margret.

VIII.

"Am I not like to thee?"
The voice was calm and low,
And between each word you might have heard
The silent forests grow;
"_The like may sway the like;_"
By which mysterious law
Mine eyes from thine and my lips from thine
The light and breath may draw.
Margret, Margret.

IX.

"My lips do need thy breath,
My lips do need thy smile,
And my pallid eyne, that light in thine
Which met the stars erewhile:
Yet go with light and life
If that thou lovest one
In all the earth who loveth thee
As truly as the sun,
Margret, Margret."

X.

Her cheek had waxèd white
Like cloud at fall of snow;
Then like to one at set of sun,
It waxèd red alsò;
For love's name maketh bold
As if the loved were near:
And then she sighed the deep long sigh
Which cometh after fear.
Margret, Margret.

XI.

"Now, sooth, I fear thee not--
Shall never fear thee now!"
(And a noble sight was the sudden light
Which lit her lifted brow.)
"Can earth be dry of streams,
Or hearts of love?" she said;
"Who doubteth love, can know not love:
He is already dead."
Margret, Margret.

XII.

"I have" ... and here her lips
Some word in pause did keep,
And gave the while a quiet smile
As if they paused in sleep,--
"I have ... a brother dear,
A knight of knightly fame!
I broidered him a knightly scarf
With letters of my name
Margret, Margret.

XIII.

"I fed his grey goshawk,
I kissed his fierce bloodhoùnd,
I sate at home when he might come
And caught his horn's far sound:
I sang him hunter's songs,
I poured him the red wine,
He looked across the cup and said,
I love thee, sister mine."
Margret, Margret.

XIV.

IT trembled on the grass
With a low, shadowy laughter;
The sounding river which rolled, for ever
Stood dumb and stagnant after:
"Brave knight thy brother is!
But better loveth he
Thy chaliced wine than thy chaunted song,
And better both than thee,
Margret, Margret."

XV.

The lady did not heed
The river's silence while
Her own thoughts still ran at their will,
And calm was still her smile.
"My little sister wears
The look our mother wore:
I smooth her locks with a golden comb,
I bless her evermore."
Margret, Margret.

XVI.

"I gave her my first bird
When first my voice it knew;
I made her share my posies rare

And told her where they grew:
I taught her God's dear name
With prayer and praise to tell,
She looked from heaven into my face
And said, _I love thee well._"
Margret, Margret.

XVII.

IT trembled on the grass
With a low, shadowy laughter;
You could see each bird as it woke and stared
Through the shrivelled foliage after.
"Fair child thy sister is!
But better loveth she
Thy golden comb than thy gathered flowers,
And better both than thee,
Margret, Margret."

XVIII.

Thy lady did not heed
The withering on the bough;
Still calm her smile albeit the while
A little pale her brow:
"I have a father old,
The lord of ancient halls;
An hundred friends are in his court
Yet only me he calls.
Margret, Margret.

XIX.

"An hundred knights are in his court
Yet read I by his knee;
And when forth they go to the tourney-show
I rise not up to see:
'T is a weary book to read,
My tryst's at set of sun,

But loving and dear beneath the stars
Is his blessing when I've done."
Margret, Margret.

XX.

IT trembled on the grass
With a low, shadowy laughter;
And moon and star though bright and far
Did shrink and darken after.
"High lord thy father is!
But better loveth he
His ancient halls than his hundred friends,
His ancient halls, than thee,
Margret, Margret."

XXI.

The lady did not heed
That the far stars did fail;
Still calm her smile, albeit the while ...
Nay, but she is not pale!
"I have more than a friend
Across the mountains dim:
No other's voice is soft to me,
Unless it nameth _him_."
Margret, Margret.

XXII.

"Though louder beats my heart,
I know his tread again,
And his fair plume aye, unless turned away,
For the tears do blind me then:
We brake no gold, a sign
Of stronger faith to be,
But I wear his last look in my soul,
Which said, _I love but thee!_"
Margret, Margret.

XXIII.

IT trembled on the grass
With a low, shadowy laughter;
And the wind did toll, as a passing soul
Were sped by church-bell after;
And shadows, 'stead of light,
Fell from the stars above,
In flakes of darkness on her face
Still bright with trusting love.
Margret, Margret.

XXIV.

"He _loved_ but only thee!
That love is transient too.
The wild hawk's bill doth dabble still
I' the mouth that vowed thee true:
Will he open his dull eyes
When tears fall on his brow?
Behold, the death-worm to his heart
Is a nearer thing than _thou_,
Margret, Margret."

XXV.

Her face was on the ground--
None saw the agony;
But the men at sea did that night agree
They heard a drowning cry:
And when the morning brake,
Fast rolled the river's tide,
With the green trees waving overhead
And a white corse laid beside.
Margret, Margret.

XXVI.

A knight's bloodhound and he
The funeral watch did keep;
With a thought o' the chase he stroked its face
As it howled to see him weep.
A fair child kissed the dead,
But shrank before its cold.
And alone yet proudly in his hall
Did stand a baron old.
Margret, Margret.

XXVII.

Hang up my harp again!
I have no voice for song.
Not song but wail, and mourners pale,
Not bards, to love belong.
O failing human love!
O light, by darkness known!
O false, the while thou treadest earth!
O deaf beneath the stone!
Margret, Margret.

THE CAP AND BELLS

The jester walked in the garden:
The garden had fallen still;
He bade his soul rise upward
And stand on her window-sill.

It rose in a straight blue garment,
When owls began to call:
It had grown wise-tongued by thinking
Of a quiet and light footfall;

But the young queen would not listen;
She rose in her pale night gown;
She drew in the heavy casement
And pushed the latches down.

He bade his heart go to her,
When the owls called out no more;
In a red and quivering garment
It sang to her through the door.

It had grown sweet-tongued by dreaming,
Of a flutter of flower-like hair;
But she took up her fan from the table
And waved it off on the air.

'I have cap and bells,' he pondered,
'I will send them to her and die;'
And when the morning whitened
He left them where she went by.

She laid them upon her bosom,
Under a cloud of her hair,
And her red lips sang them a love song:
Till stars grew out of the air.

She opened her door and her window,
And the heart and the soul came through,
To her right hand came the red one,
To her left hand came the blue.

They set up a noise like crickets,
A chattering wise and sweet,
And her hair was a folded flower
And the quiet of love in her feet.